

I claim:

1. An apparatus for processing multimedia programs comprising:
 - an input port used to receive a multimedia program;
 - a separator coupled to said input port and adapted to selectively separate said multimedia program to generate corresponding multimedia output signals and an audio signal; and
 - an audio output stage adapted to generate an output signal from said audio signal.
2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said input port is adapted to receive a broadband multimedia program.
3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said input port includes a media reader.
4. The apparatus of claim 3 wherein said input port includes a DVD reader.
5. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said separator is adapted to generate output signals including an audio and a video component.
6. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said separator is adapted to generate output signals including a multichannel audio signal.
7. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said audio output stage includes a folder circuit adapted to fold said multichannel audio signal into a stereo channel audio signal.

8. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein said audio output stage further includes a compressor that compressor said stereo channel audio signal into a compressed digital output signal.
9. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein said compressor compresses said stereo channel audio signal using an MPEG standard.
10. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein said compressor compresses said stereo channel using an ATRAC standard.
11. An apparatus for generating a multimedia output and an audio output from a distributed network comprising:
- a broadband input port adapted to receive a multimedia program from the network;
 - a data storage adapted to store said multimedia program;
 - a controller adapted to receive selections from a customer and to generate commands responsive to said selections;
 - a separator responsive to said commands and adapted to selectively separate said multimedia program into one of a multimedia output signal and an audio signal; and
 - an audio output stage adapted generate an output signal from said audio signal.
12. The apparatus of claim 11 wherein said multimedia program is compressed and wherein said separator is adapted to decompress said multimedia program.

13. The apparatus of claim 12 wherein said multimedia program is compressed using an MPEG protocol and wherein said decoder is adapted to use said MPEG protocol to decode said multimedia program.

14. The apparatus of claim 11 wherein audio signal is a multichannel audio signal; and wherein said audio output stage includes a folder circuit adapted to fold said multichannel audio signal, and an encoder adapted to encode the folded audio signal using a standard compression protocol.

15. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said encoder is adapted to encoded said folded audio signal using an MPEG protocol.

16. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said encoder is adapted to encode said folded audio signal using an ATRAC protocol.

17. A method of processing a multimedia program comprising the steps of:
receiving said multimedia program;
selectively separating said multimedia program into at least one of a multimedia output signal and an audio signal; and
outputting said audio signal.

18. The method of claim 18 wherein said multimedia program is received electronically from a distribution network, further comprising storing said multimedia program.

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20. The method of claim 18 wherein said multimedia program is compressed using an MPEG protocol further comprising decompressing said multimedia program using the MPEG protocol to generate one of said multimedia output signal and said audio signal.

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21. The method of claim 18 wherein said audio signal is a multichannel audio signal, further comprising folding said multichannel audio signal into a stereo audio signal.

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